

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 9-26 and 30-38 are pending in this application. Independent Claims 1, 16, 32-35 and 38 are amended by the present amendment. Support for the amended claims can be found in the original specification, claims and drawings.¹ No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1-5, 9-24 and 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Sullivan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,477,531, herein "Sullivan"); Claims 1-5, 9-24 and 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,691,159, herein "Grewal") in view of Sullivan; Claims 25-26 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal, Sullivan, and House et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,247, hereinafter House); and Claim 38 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal, Sullivan and Hayward et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,629,134, herein "Hayward").

Claims 1-5, 9-24 and 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Sullivan. In response to this rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 1, 16 and 32-35 recite novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied reference.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, in part, an online support method that gives online support to eliminate a problem arising in a device, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a user of the device with a specific form that enables the user to input and transmit information with regard to the problem;
- (b) providing the user of the device with support information, which is prepared in advance for elimination of the problem, prior to said step (a),
wherein the specific form *is used to initiate an e-mail exchange and* comprises a first part that asks the user to input

¹ E.g., specification, Fig. 10.

first information generally required for analysis of the problem, and a second part that enables the user to input *an e-mail address*;

(c) obtaining browsing record information, which represents a user's browsing record of the support information, in addition to information input into the specific form; and

(d) transmitting the information input into the specific form and the browsing record information attached to the specific form to an online support operator.

Independent Claims 16, 32-35 and 38, while directed to alternative statutory embodiments, recite substantially similar features. Accordingly, the remarks presented below are applicable to each of independent Claims 1, 16, 32-35.

Turning to the applied reference, Sullivan describes a method for automated technical support in a computer network having a client machine and at least one server. The method allows a user to fill out entries on a form (e.g., Figs. 5-6) in a self-help session to gather diagnostic data. If this step is unsuccessful, the session may enter a live-help session, during which a support technician can obtain the information generated based on the self-help session to diagnose a problem.²

Sullivan, however, fails to teach or suggest providing a user of the device with a specific form “*used to initiate an e-mail exchange*” that includes “...a second part that enables the user to input *an e-mail address*,” as recited in amended independent Claim 1.

In addressing the “specific form” feature recited in Claim 1, the Official Action cites Fig. 6 and steps 66 and 68 of Fig. 4. Fig. 6 of Sullivan shows a technical support interface that allows a user to enter a brief summary of a problem (e.g., “I am having a problem with Microsoft Word for Windows”). As described in Fig. 4, the user may then be directed to either a “live help” support session with a support engineer (SE) or a “self-help” routine that includes accessing a Web page. Thus, Sullivan describes a support interface that allows a

² Sullivan, Abstract.

user to enter information about a problem and enter either a live help session or a self-help session.

Sullivan, however, fails to teach or suggest providing a user with a specific form “*used to initiate an e-mail exchange*” that includes “...a second part that enables the user to input *an e-mail address*,” as recited in amended independent Claim 1. Specifically, Sullivan fails to teach or suggest that e-mail exchange for user support is even an option, thus there would be no reason for such an input to be provided on Sullivan’s support interface.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 1 (and the claims that depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) be withdrawn. For substantially similar reasons, it is also submitted that independent Claims 16, and 32-35 (and the claims that depend therefrom) patentably define over Sullivan.

Claims 1-5, 9-24 and 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal in view of Sullivan; independent Claim 38 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal, Sullivan and Hayward; and Claims 25-26 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Grewal, Sullivan, and House. In response to these rejections, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 1, 16, 32-35 and 38 recite novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied references.

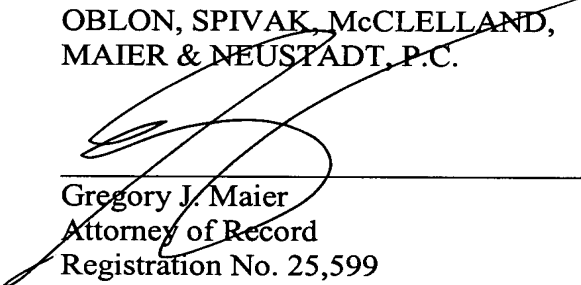
At p. 6, the Official Action admits that Grewal fails to teach or suggest “the one specific form that allows a user to input device identity, working status and arbitrary information...” In an attempt to remedy this deficiency, the Official Action relies on Sullivan. However, as noted above, Sullivan fails to teach or suggest the features directed to the “specific form” recited in amended independent Claims 1, 16, 32-35 and 38. Further, neither Hayward nor House remedy the above noted deficiencies of Grewal and Sullivan.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claims 1, 16, 32-35 and 38 (and the claims that depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. 103 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-5, 9-26 and 30-38, is patentably distinguishing over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Andrew T. Harry
Registration No. 56,959